

## Chapter 876

## (Senate Bill 187)

AN ACT concerning

**Correctional Services – Comprehensive Rehabilitative ~~Prerelease~~ Reentry  
Prerelease Services – Female Incarcerated Individuals  
*(Monica Cooper Prerelease Act)***

FOR the purpose of ~~altering certain provisions requiring a certain prerelease facility for female incarcerated individuals to instead require a reentry facility;~~ altering the required specifications for a certain ~~prerelease reentry~~ prerelease facility for female incarcerated individuals; requiring the Department of General Services to ~~direct certain procurement processes for the construction of a certain prerelease reentry facility for female incarcerated individuals~~ submit a certain timeline of deliverables to certain entities; requiring the Commissioner of Correction to make certain services available to certain female incarcerated individuals; requiring the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to ~~implement certain comprehensive rehabilitative prerelease reentry services by a certain date~~ meet certain requirements relating to the planning, construction, and operation of the prerelease facility; ~~requiring the Maryland Department of Labor and the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to report certain information to the General Assembly;~~ requiring the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to report certain information to certain legislative committees; requiring the Department of General Services to provide an update on the progress of design and construction of the prerelease facility to certain legislative committees; requiring the Office of the Correctional Ombudsman to review and verify the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services' compliance with this Act and report certain information to certain legislative committees; and generally relating to comprehensive rehabilitative ~~prerelease reentry~~ prerelease services for female incarcerated individuals.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
 Article – Correctional Services  
 Section 3–301 ~~and 3–303~~ through 3–305  
 Annotated Code of Maryland  
 (2025 Replacement Volume)

BY adding to  
Article – Correctional Services  
Section 3–301 and 3–303  
Annotated Code of Maryland  
(2025 Replacement Volume)

~~BY adding to~~  
~~Article – Correctional Services~~

~~Section 3-301.1~~  
 Annotated Code of Maryland  
 (2025 Replacement Volume)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

**Article – Correctional Services**

**3-301.**

~~(A) (1)~~ **IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED:**

~~(2)~~ **“ELIGIBLE, “ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL” MEANS A AN INCARCERATED WOMAN WHO:**

~~(1)~~ **IS WITHIN 18 36 MONTHS OF THE WOMAN’S ANTICIPATED RELEASE DATE; AND**

~~(2)~~ **HAS PRERELEASE OR MINIMUM SECURITY STATUS.**

~~(3)~~ **“REENTRY FACILITY” MEANS A COMMUNITY-BASED FACILITY OR ANY OTHER FACILITY OPERATED BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.**

~~3-301.~~ **3-302.**

(a) Subject to subsection (d) of this section, the Commissioner shall operate a comprehensive rehabilitative *prerelease* ~~prerelease unit~~ **REENTRY FACILITY** for ~~women~~ **ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS** that:

(1) is a separate structure in which the services specified in § ~~3-303(b)~~ **3-304(B) 3-305** of this subtitle are provided;

(2) ~~has security features for female incarcerated individuals who:~~

~~(i) present the least risk of violence;~~

~~(ii) present the least risk of escape; and~~

~~(iii) have a record of satisfactory institutional behavior; and~~

~~(3) matches security level on a validated gender-responsive risk measure~~  
IS ARCHITECTURALLY DESIGNED AND CONSTRUCTED TO FACILITATE THE PROVISION OF SERVICES SPECIFIED IN § ~~3-304(B)~~ 3-305 OF THIS SUBTITLE; AND

**(3) INCLUDES:**

**(I) FEATURES THAT:**

**1. BALANCE PHYSICAL SAFETY AND SECURITY WITH VISUAL PRIVACY AND DIGNITY; AND**

**2. ENCOURAGE REHABILITATION BY PROVIDING AS CLOSE TO A NONCARCERAL ENVIRONMENT AS PRACTICABLE;**

**(II) HOUSING UNITS WITH DOUBLE AND SINGLE OCCUPANCY;**

**(III) HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE ROOMS, WHEELCHAIR RAMPS, AND DESIGNATED HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACES;**

**(IV) BATHROOMS THAT MAXIMIZE PRIVACY, DIGNITY, AND SECURITY OF RESIDENTS, STAFF, AND VISITORS;**

**(V) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES;**

**(VI) INDOOR AND OUTDOOR MEETING, LOUNGE, AND VISITING SPACES, INCLUDING FAMILY VISITING SPACES;**

**(VII) ~~A CLASSROOM~~ CLASSROOMS;**

**(VIII) A CAREER CENTER;**

**(IX) A NONEMERGENCY MEDICAL SUITE;**

**(X) ON-SITE RECREATIONAL, CREATIVE, AND ATHLETIC FACILITIES; AND**

**(XI) ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.**

(b) [(1) In determining where to place a prerelease unit for women, the Commissioner shall determine into which area, defined by zip codes, the largest percentage of incarcerated individuals will likely be released.

(2)] A prerelease prerelease unit REENTRY FACILITY for women shall be:

(1) located in [or adjacent to the zip codes identified in paragraph (1) of this subsection] ~~BALTIMORE CITY THE LOCAL JURISDICTION WHERE THE LARGEST NUMBER OF FEMALE INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS WILL LIKELY BE RELEASED, REASONABLY CLOSE TO THE COMMUNITIES TO WHICH THOSE INDIVIDUALS WILL RETURN; AND BALTIMORE CITY ON A SITE THAT IS:~~

~~(I) NOT LESS THAN 3 ACRES IN LAND AREA; AND~~

~~(II) NOT LOCATED WITHIN ONE-HALF MILE OF ANY EXISTING CORRECTIONAL FACILITY; AND ON A SITE THAT IS:~~

~~(I) NOT LESS THAN 3 ACRES IN LAND AREA; AND~~

~~(II) NOT LOCATED WITHIN A 1-MILE RADIUS OF ANY EXISTING CORRECTIONAL FACILITY; AND~~

(2) ABLE TO ACCOMMODATE THE ADMINISTRATION, HOUSING, PROGRAMMING, AND SERVICES REQUIRED UNDER THIS SUBTITLE FOR NOT FEWER THAN 1.25 TIMES THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF WOMEN AT THE MARYLAND CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION FOR WOMEN WHO WERE ELIGIBLE FOR PRERELEASE STATUS IN CALENDAR YEAR ~~2024, 2023~~, AS REPORTED BY THE DEPARTMENT IN ITS OCTOBER 2024 REPORT TO THE SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE AND THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE.

(c) An incarcerated individual assigned to a *prerelease* ~~prerelease unit~~ REENTRY FACILITY for women may have access to the community for any purpose described in § ~~3-305(a) 3-306(A) 3-307(A)~~ of this subtitle.

(d) The Department shall:

(1) identify a location, acquire property, and design a site plan for the *prerelease* ~~prerelease unit~~ REENTRY FACILITY for women on or before ~~June 1, 2021~~ OCTOBER 1, 2027, OR NOT LATER THAN 6 MONTHS THEREAFTER;

(2) begin construction or renovation of the facility on or before ~~September 1, 2021; and~~ JULY 1, 2028, OR NOT LATER THAN 6 MONTHS THEREAFTER;

(3) COMPLETE THE CONSTRUCTION OR RENOVATION ON OR BEFORE MARCH 1, 2031, OR NOT LATER THAN 6 MONTHS THEREAFTER; AND

(4) begin operating and providing services in the facility on or before ~~June 1, 2023~~ SEPTEMBER 1, 2031, OR NOT LATER THAN 6 MONTHS THEREAFTER.

~~3-301.1, 3-303.~~

~~(A) ON REQUEST OF THE DEPARTMENT, THE~~ THE DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES SHALL:

~~(1) REVIEW AND EVALUATE ANY PROPOSALS CURRENTLY IN POSSESSION OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE FACILITY REQUIREMENTS IN § 3-301 OF THIS SUBTITLE BY JUNE 1, 2026;~~

~~(2) IF NO CURRENT PROPOSAL EVALUATED UNDER ITEM (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION SATISFIES THE REQUIREMENTS UNDER § 3-301 OF THIS SUBTITLE, SUBJECT TO ITEM (2) OF THIS SECTION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE EXPEDITED PROCUREMENT PROCESS UNDER § 13-108 OF THE STATE FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT ARTICLE, ISSUE A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE PLANNING, DESIGN, AND CONSTRUCTION OF A PRERELEASE UNIT REENTRY FACILITY FOR WOMEN, AS REQUIRED UNDER § 3-301-3-302 OF THIS SUBTITLE, BY AUGUST JUNE 1, 2026; AND~~

~~(2) PRIOR TO ISSUING THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS UNDER ITEM (1) OF THIS SECTION, SUBMIT A TIMELINE OF DELIVERABLES FOR THE PLANNING, DESIGN, AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE REENTRY PRERELEASE FACILITY FOR WOMEN TO THE SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE, THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, AND THE OFFICE OF THE CORRECTIONAL OMBUDSMAN.~~

~~(3) REVIEW AND EVALUATE PROPOSALS IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT; AND~~

~~(4) AWARD A CONTRACT TO A PROVIDER AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE.~~

~~(B) A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS ISSUED UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION SHALL ACCURATELY AND COMPLETELY DESCRIBE, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, THE LOCATION, USES, AND TIMELINE FOR DELIVERABLES TOWARD COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT.~~

~~(C) THE CONTRACT AWARDED UNDER SUBSECTION (A)(4) OF THIS SECTION TO BUILD A PRERELEASE UNIT FOR FEMALE INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS SHALL:~~

~~(1) COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS IN § 3-301 OF THIS SUBTITLE; AND~~

~~(2) INCLUDE:~~

~~(i) HOUSING UNITS WITH DOUBLE AND SINGLE OCCUPANCY;~~

- ~~(II) HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE ROOMS, WHEELCHAIR RAMPS, AND DESIGNATED HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACES;~~
- ~~(III) BATHROOMS THAT MAXIMIZE PRIVACY, DIGNITY, AND SECURITY OF RESIDENTS, STAFF, AND VISITORS;~~
- ~~(IV) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES;~~
- ~~(V) INDOOR AND OUTDOOR MEETING, LOUNGE, AND VISITING SPACES;~~
- ~~(VI) A CLASSROOM;~~
- ~~(VII) A CAREER CENTER;~~
- ~~(VIII) A NONEMERGENCY MEDICAL SUITE;~~
- ~~(IX) ON-SITE RECREATIONAL, CREATIVE, AND ATHLETIC FACILITIES; AND~~
- ~~(X) ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.~~

[3-302.] 3-304.

The Commissioner has the same powers and duties relating to a *prerelease* ~~[prerelease unit] REENTRY FACILITY~~ for women as the Commissioner has for any other correctional facility in the Division.

~~3-303.~~ 3-305.

- (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

~~(2) “ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL” MEANS AN INCARCERATED INDIVIDUAL WITH PRERELEASE STATUS AT THE MARYLAND CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION FOR WOMEN.~~

~~(3) (2)~~ “Evidence-based programs and practices” has the meaning stated in § 6-119 of this article.

~~(4) (3)~~ “GENDER-RESPONSIVE SERVICES” MEANS EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES THAT RECOGNIZE ADDRESS THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF INCARCERATED WOMEN IN PRERELEASE STATUS ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS REGARDING THEIR THERAPEUTIC, EDUCATIONAL, AND VOCATIONAL

**GOALS, LIFE SKILLS, PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT, SOCIALIZATION, CULTURE, EXPOSURE TO TRAUMA, AND LIFE EXPERIENCES, TO REDUCE CRIMINOGENIC RISKS AND SUPPORT SUCCESSFUL REENTRY, RECOVERY, AND RECIDIVISM REDUCTION.**

[(3)] ~~(5)~~ (4) “Innovative programs and practices” has the meaning stated in § 6–119 of this article.

(b) ~~(1)~~ The Commissioner shall make evidence-based, TRAUMA-INFORMED, and gender-responsive services available to female incarcerated ELIGIBLE individuals [at the prerelease unit FACILITY for women required under § ~~3–301~~ 3–302 of this subtitle] ~~WITH PRERELEASE STATUS.~~

~~(2) THE SERVICES REQUIRED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION SHALL BE PROVIDED TO ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS BEFORE THE FINAL CONSTRUCTION AND OCCUPATION OF THE FACILITY REQUIRED UNDER § ~~3–301~~ 3–302 OF THIS SUBTITLE.~~

(c) The comprehensive rehabilitative prerelease ~~prerelease~~ REENTRY services shall utilize evidence-based, TRAUMA-INFORMED, AND GENDER-RESPONSIVE programs and practices and innovative programs and practices to:

(1) assist female incarcerated individuals in improving their education, upgrading vocational skills, and obtaining suitable employment through classes to earn industry certification or community college credits, workforce training, and job placement;

(2) provide female incarcerated individuals with the opportunity to strengthen family and community relationships through extended family leave, parenting workshops, and family reunification assistance;

(3) provide integrative and gender-responsive services, including medical treatment, trauma-informed counseling, mental health treatment, and substance use disorder treatment to address overall health and trauma needs and help female incarcerated individuals achieve stable and productive roles in society; ~~and~~

(4) develop individualized and comprehensive reentry plans involving community provider partnerships for female incarcerated individuals to reduce barriers to obtaining housing, jobs, education, health care, childcare and child welfare, transportation, legal advocacy, case management, and other needs; AND

(5) SCREEN FEMALE INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR PUBLIC BENEFITS AND PROVIDE RELEVANT APPLICATIONS AND ASSISTANCE COMPLETING EACH APPLICATION PRIOR TO RELEASE AS PART OF A REENTRY PLAN.

~~(D) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DEVELOP A PLAN TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE GENDER-RESPONSIVE SERVICES TO ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS~~

~~ON SITE AT THE MARYLAND CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION FOR WOMEN ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2026.~~

~~(2) THE DEPARTMENT MAY CONTRACT WITH ANOTHER ENTITY TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE GENDER RESPONSIVE SERVICES.~~

~~(E) INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS ASSIGNED TO THE FACILITY REQUIRED UNDER § 3-302 OF THIS SUBTITLE MAY NOT BE TRANSPORTED TO ANOTHER FACILITY TO RECEIVE COMPREHENSIVE REHABILITATIVE REENTRY PRERELEASE SERVICES.~~

[3-304.] 3-306.

~~[(a)] By contract or purchase of service agreement, the Division may arrange for a person or governmental unit to provide comprehensive rehabilitative [prerelease] REENTRY services [in a prerelease unit FACILITY for women].~~

~~[(b)] With the Secretary's approval, the Commissioner may contract with a person or a municipal or county authority to provide food, housing, transportation, and programs to incarcerated individuals in a prerelease unit FACILITY for women.~~

~~[(c)] Under a contract with the federal government, the Commissioner may house federal incarcerated individuals in a prerelease unit for women.]~~

[3-305.] 3-307.

(a) Subject to regulations adopted by the Commissioner, the Commissioner may delegate to the facility administrator of a *prerelease* [prerelease unit] REENTRY FACILITY for women the authority to grant incarcerated individuals the privilege of leaving the confines of the [unit] FACILITY for the purpose of:

- (1) engaging in or seeking employment;
- (2) participating in educational programs or vocational training;
- (3) participating in community or civic activities;
- (4) participating in volunteer work;
- (5) participating in athletic competition; or
- (6) making personal or family visits.

(b) When outside the confines of a *prerelease* ~~[prerelease unit]~~ **REENTRY FACILITY** for women, an incarcerated individual shall carry, at all times, a copy of the form signed by the facility administrator containing the conditions governing the grant of leave.

(c) (1) An incarcerated individual who is on leave is deemed to be in the custody of the Commissioner to the same extent and subject to the same supervision and control as an incarcerated individual who is actually in confinement.

(2) An incarcerated individual who escapes while on leave under this section is subject to the penalties in § 9-404 of the Criminal Law Article.

~~SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before May 1, 2026, the Maryland Department of Labor and the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services shall jointly submit a report to the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, the House Judiciary Committee, and the House Appropriations Committee, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, on the status of reentry services in the State, including:~~

- ~~(1) the Maryland Reentry Initiative;~~
- ~~(2) workforce development programs and adult learning programs;~~
- ~~(3) reentry navigators;~~
- ~~(4) American Job Center services and programs;~~
- ~~(5) reentry and social work services; and~~
- ~~(6) reentry staffing and data collection for:~~
  - ~~(i) case management and social work;~~
  - ~~(ii) substance use peer recovery;~~
  - ~~(iii) education; and~~
  - ~~(iv) medical and mental health contractors.~~

~~SECTION 2. ~~3.~~ 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before July ~~June~~ 1, 2026, December 15, 2026, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services shall provide a preliminary report on the progress the Department has made to comply with Section 1 of this Act, including any specific steps taken and dates on which specific steps were taken to the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, the House Judiciary Committee, and the House Appropriations Committee, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article.~~

SECTION ~~3~~ ~~4~~ 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before ~~September July 1, 2026, May 1, 2027,~~ the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services and the Department of General Services shall provide an update on the progress of design and construction of the ~~prerelease unit reentry~~ prerelease facility for women to the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, the House Judiciary Committee, and the House Appropriations Committee, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article.

SECTION ~~4~~ ~~5~~ 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

(a) ~~On or before December Beginning June 1, 2026~~ On or before June 1 each year beginning June 1, 2027, the Office of the Correctional Ombudsman established under Title 9, Subtitle 40 of the State Government Article shall review and verify the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services' progress and submit a report, including findings and recommendations, to the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee and the House Judiciary Committee, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article.

(b) The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services shall fully cooperate with the Office of the Correctional Ombudsman and provide all information, data, and facility access requested to complete the review required under this section.

SECTION ~~5~~ ~~6~~ 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act is an emergency measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health or safety, has been passed by a ye and nay vote supported by three-fifths of all the members elected to each of the two Houses of the General Assembly, and shall take effect from the date it is enacted.

**Enacted under Article II, § 17(c) of the Maryland Constitution, May 31, 2026.**